

Foster Parent Connections - April 15, 2022

Missouri Department of Social Services sent this bulletin at 04/15/2022 10:00 AM CDT

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April 15, 2022

Vol 2, Issue 8

May is Foster Care Month

Foster Care Month is quickly approaching! Each May, we recognize all of our foster families and the commitment they have made to our children.

#IFosterBecause...

Remember to send in your #IFosterBecause photos and/or quotes to be shared on the Department of Social Services Facebook and Twitter pages throughout the month. Your messages will help spread awareness, and hopefully inspire others to get involved with foster care!

To participate, you can follow these easy steps:

1. On a blank piece of paper, using a black or dark colored marker, write "#IFosterBecause" in large writing at the top
2. Continue the statement in large writing with a few words or a one-sentence explanation of why you foster
3. Take a selfie or have someone take a picture of you holding your sign (TIP: make sure you can clearly see your face (smile big!) and written statement in the photo you plan to submit)
 - If you have a child in care that is included in your photo please remember to cover their face in order to protect their identity
4. Email your photo to Bryanna Barber (Bryanna.Barber@dss.mo.gov) by April 25 for us to share on social media (Facebook and Twitter) during Foster Care Month in May

If you are not comfortable with submitting a photo to be shared on social media, you are welcome to email Bryanna your statement about why you foster to be shared anonymously.

Again, THANK YOU for everything you do for Missouri's children, every day. We cannot thank you enough for your love, dedication and service!



We want YOUR feedback!

The **Foster Parent Survey** closes today, April 15, at 5:00 p.m. All answers are anonymous, and the survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Your feedback offers valuable insight and allows us to gauge what support services are working, as well as what we can improve.

Training & Events

Virtual Trainings

- **Level-B Virtual Training** will be held on June 14 - 16 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. More sessions will be held in September and December. To register, email Dana.L.Kloess@dss.mo.gov.
- MPACT will be presenting **Understanding the IEP** on Monday, April 18 from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Your child's IEP is the cornerstone of their education. This workshop offers an in-depth look at the evaluation process, qualifying for an IEP, the many components that must be addressed in the IEP document, as well as how progress will be monitored. Through this training, parents will gain a better understanding of their role as an equal participant in the IEP Process.
- MPACT will be presenting **Understanding the Evaluation Process** on Wednesday, April 20 from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. The evaluation process is the first step in determining if a child needs special education services, a Section 504 Plan or another educational intervention. Parents need to understand the reasons to have a child evaluated, the steps in the evaluation process and the options that can be pursued if there is a disagreement about evaluation.

Raise the Future Classes

Raise the Future offers a range of great classes for foster, resource, kinship, and adoptive families. The site is geared toward adoption, but there are several resources on trauma and issues many kids face. You can check out the different classes on [Raise the Future's website](#).



Reminders of Resources for Foster Families

Foster Care Ambassadors as Mentors

Do you need a helping hand or a listening ear? While being a foster parent has its challenges, you are not alone.

Foster Care Ambassadors are seasoned foster parents willing to be a mentor to other foster families. If you are interested in talking with a Foster Care Ambassador, please email FosterCare@dss.mo.gov, and we will put you in contact with an ambassador. Whether you are new or a seasoned foster parent, this resource is available to all families (traditional, relative, emergency, respite, and/or elevated needs).

What is Access Crisis Intervention?

[Access Crisis Intervention](#) (ACI) provides access to services for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. ACI offers an opportunity for individuals to receive necessary behavioral health crisis services to help reduce unnecessary interventions, such as hospitalization or detentions. By calling the ACI hotline, individuals have access to behavioral health crisis services that are free and available to both youth and adults.

- All calls are strictly confidential.
- ACI hotlines are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by behavioral health professionals.
- Assistance may include phone contact, referrals to resources in the community, next day behavioral health appointments, or a mobile response. Mobile is defined as either going to the location of the crisis, or to another secure community location.

Visit the [ACI Hotline Numbers by County Map](#) to learn more about ACI and find your local number.

Memos/Practice Alerts

There have been no Memos or Practice Alerts since the last issue of the newsletter.



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